

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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R 181807Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1532

AMEMBASSY PARIS

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 11716

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO USCINCEUR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, SP, US

SUBJECT: SPANISH BASE NEGOTIATIONS

REFS: A) STATE 162979; B) BONN 8809; C) BONN 8959;
D) BONN 10358

1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH REF A THE FOLLOWING IS OUR
ASSESSMENT OF HOW THE GERMANS VIEW THE SPANISH SITUATION,
INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY OF SOME NEW KIND OF BILATERAL
OR TRILATERAL ARRANGEMENT.

2. PREVIOUS REPORTING FROM BONN (REFS B, C, D) HAS
HIGHLIGHTED THE EMOTIONAL NATURE OF THE DOMESTIC
POLITICAL REACTION TO GERMAN GESTURES TOWARD THE
FRANCO REGIME. ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF HILDEBRANDT'S
ATTENDANCE AT THE ANNUAL VICTORY PARADE IN MADRID
UNLEASHED A POLITICAL FUROR IN THE FRG, WITH THE
GENERAL EVENTUALLY RECEIVING A PUBLIC REBUKE FROM HIS
DEFENSE MINISTER. EVEN THE STRONGLY CONSERVATIVE
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OPPOSITION PARTIES DID NOT SUPPORT HILDEBRANDT'S

ACTION.

3. IN VIEW OF THE PREVAILING POLITICAL CLIMATE IN THE FRG, WE WOULD RATE THE CHANCES OF AN FRG DEFENSE INITIATIVE ALONG BILATERAL OR EVEN TRILATERAL LINES AS EXTREMELY LOW. THE GERMANS ARE HAVING A DIFFICULT ENOUGH TIME IN THEIR OWN DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP WITH FRANCE, AND THE PROSPECT OF A FRANCO-GERMAN APPROACH TO SPAIN APPEARS TO BE AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS DEFINITELY NOT COME. FOR THE GERMANS TO STRIKE OUT ON THEIR OWN IN A NEW BILATERAL DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP WOULD CONTRADICT DEFMIN LEBER'S RECENT PUBLIC REMARKS CONCERNING HILDEBRANDT'S "INCONSIDERATE" ACT. WE HAVE NOT SEEN ANY EVIDENCE THAT OTHER SPD LEADERS -- INCLUDING THE CHANCELLOR HIMSELF -- ARE UNDERGOING A CHANGE OF HEART ABOUT SPAIN.

4. WHILE ANY MAJOR FRG INITIATIVE VIS-A-VIS SPAIN APPEARS TO BE FORECLOSED UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, THE DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT THE FRG HAS GIVEN ITS APPROVAL IN THE PAST TO VISITS BY SPANISH MILITARY OFFICERS TO US MILITARY INSTALLATIONS IN GERMANY. WERE THE QUESTION OF A PERMANENT SPANISH LIAISON OFFICE AT EUCOM HEADQUARTERS TO COME UP IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, WE BELIEVE THE GERMANS COULD PROBABLY BE BROUGHT TO ACCEPT SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT, EMPHASIZING OF COURSE THE US-SPANISH ASPECT OF THE DEAL WHEN THE NEWS BECOMES PUBLIC.
HILLENBRAND

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